

## Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 PC-01 USIA-06 INR-07

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R 190741Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0239

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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PARIS FOR OECD/WILLIAMS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, XY, NG

SUBJECT: AFDROUGHT: CILSS MEETING IN NIAMEY

REF: NIAMEY 1024

1. FROM ALL REPORTS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN, AND WE ARE STILL CHECKING, THIRD CILSS MEETING AT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS LEVEL IN NIAMEY MARCH 13 AND 14 WENT FAR BETTER THAN EXPECTED. AT OUTSET, NIGERIEN HOSTS WERE APPREHENSIVE BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT SURE WHETHER MALIANS AND UPPER VOLTANS WOULD SIT DOWN TOGETHER OR WHETHER MALIANS WOULD PULL ANOTHER WALK-OUT TO DETRIMENT OF AFRICAN REGIONAL IMAGE AND TO FURTHER EMBARRASSMENT OF NIGER. THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE DISCONTENT ABOUT REGIONAL COORDINATOR DAKOURE AND HIS ALLEGED LACK OF INTEREST IN OR DIRECTION OF CILSS, WHICH IT WAS FEARED MIGHT DEVELOP INTO MOVE TO OUST HIM FROM OFFICE.

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2. THIS DISSATISFACTION WITH CILSS WAS RELECTED IN PRESS STATEMENTS MADE BY DELEGATES ON ARRIVAL IN NIAMEY. GENERAL THRUST OF COMMENTS WAS EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT CILSS WOULD BE FULLY REPRESENTED AT MEETING (DAKOURE DID NOT ATTEND BANJUL MEETING) AND THAT NIAMEY SESSION WOULD BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH UNFINISHED BUSINESS LEFT OVER FROM PREVIOUS BANJUL GATHERING.

3. AT CEREMONIAL OPENING MARCH 13, VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT SANI SIDOU WELCOMED DELEGATBVULRU BEHALYIOF NIGER. IN BRIEF OPENING SPEECH HE CALLED ON COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO STRENGTHEN CILSS SO IT COULD ACHIEVE ITS BASIC MISSION OF REHABILITATION OF SAHEL. NIGER FOR ITS PART HAD COMMITTED SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES TO DROUGHT RECOVERY AND WITH HELP OF INTERNATIONAL DONORS HAD TURNED SITUATION AROUND. NIGERIENS WERE ONCE AGAIN BREATHING MORE EASILY AND FUTURE LOOKED BETTER. SANI SIDOU ALSO URGED DELEGATES TO FIND WAYS TO OVERCOME BOSTACLES IN CILSS WHICH HAD RPEVENTED IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS ADOPTED BY CILSS AT OUAGADOUGOU AND BANJUL SESSIONS AND TO ENDOW CILSS WITH SENSE OF VITALITY WHICH IT NEEDED TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION.

4. WITH CEREMONIES OUT OF WAY, CILSS WENT INTO SERIES OF CLOSED MEETINGS. ONLY OUTSIDERS INVITED TO ADDRESS DELEGATIONS WERE DAC CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS AND UNSO REP MAGDI FROM OUAGADOUGOU BOTH OF WHOM SPOKE AFTERNOON MARCH14. ONLY PUBLIC ACCOUNTING OF PROCEEDINGS WAS COMMUNIQUE ISSUED MARCH 15 (REFTEL).

5. ALTHOUGH NONE OF PARTICIPANTS HAVE COMMENTED ON MEETING FOLLOWING IMPRESSIONS AND INFORMATION ON DECISIONS HAVE SURFACED:

A) MEETING CAN BE CONSDIERED SUCCESS, MUCH TO EVERYONE'S RELIEF;

B) PARTICIPANTS AND ESPECIALLY NIGER WERE PLEASED THAT UPPER VOLTA AND MALI SAT DOWN TOGETHER AND STAYED TOGETHER AND THAT CEAO FIASCO IN NIAMEY WAS NOT REPEATED.

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C) COUNCIL OF MINISTERS REACHED DECISION TO KEEP PRESENT LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN CILSS WITH UPPER VOLTAN CHAIRMAN (DAKOURE) AND MALIAN SECRETARY GENERAL (KONATE) IN INTEREST OF REGIONAL SOLIDARITY AND TO PROMOTE BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. DAKOURE WAS IN EFFECT ASKED TO STAY ON. NIGER HAD CANDIDATE BUT HELD BACK.

BAL IN ZHBGISING DAKOUREJWSVCONTINUED LEADERSHIP OF

CILSS, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS PRIVATELY ASKED DAKOURE TO SPEND MORE TIME ON CILSS AFFAIRS AND HE REPORTEDLY AGREED.

E) PARTICIPANTS WERE ENCOURAGED BY REPORTS THAT UPPER VOLTAN AND MALI DELEGATIONS HAD MET PRIVATELY LATE INTO NIGHT MARCH 14 OVER BOTTLE OF SCOTCH TO TALK ABOUT THEIR MAUTUAL PROBLEMS. NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW WHAT TRANSPIRED, BUT FACT BOTH TIDZJNGKERGED FROM SESSION SMILING TAKEN AS HOPEFUL SVBN.

6. COMMENT ON DAC CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS PRESENTMON OF CILSS FOLLOWS IN SPETEL.

7. COMMENT: NIAMEY MEETING OF CILSS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DOMINATED MORE BY POLITICAL THAN ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS BUT NET EFFECT MAY HAVE BEEN TO INSTILL NEW LIFE INTO ORGANIZATION AND TO GIVE DAKTRE NEW LEASE TO GET ON WITH CILSS BUSINESS. WE HAVYY EEN NOTHING TO SUGGEST THAT CILSS IS BETTER EQUIPPED ECONOMICALLY TO DEAL WITH ITS MISSION OF REHABILITATION OF SAHEL AS RESULT OF ANY DECISIOU TAKEN AT NIAMEY BUT SESSION'S SUCCESS IN OVZNCTING POLITICAL PROBLEMS THAT LOOMED LARGE AT OUTSET HAS GIVEN PARTICIPANTS SENSE OF PRIDE IN MAINTAINING REGIONAL HARMONY AND GREATER STAKE IN CILSS AS REGIONAL KGANIZATION WITH WHICH ALL MEMBERS PREPARED COOPERATE.HECK

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